

Flowing THROUGH KANKAKEE

1670s - 1790s

1800s - 1850s

1860s - 1880s

1900s

1910s

1920s

1930s - 1940s

1950s - 1960s

1970s

1980s

1990s

2000s

1679 – French explorer Rene de LaSalle first explores the Kankakee region

1725 – Potawatomi move to the Kankakee region

1779 – The U.S. General Land Office begins surveying the Indiana terrain

1780 – Indiana has 5.6 million acres of wetlands

1800 – Creation of the Indiana Territory

1816 – Indiana becomes a state

1827 – Potawatomi surrender their lake front lands along Lake Michigan

1842 – First bridge built over the Kankakee

1849 – First Swamplands Act passed by Congress; it encourages farmers to reclaim land from swamps and wetlands

1850 – Federal government grants Indiana control over 1.26 million acres of swampland to levy and drain in order to reduce flooding and control mosquitos

1860 – Runaway slaves hide in Bacon's Swamp (Indianapolis) as a stop on the Underground Railroad

1869 – Indiana General Assembly passes a drainage law; allows wetland owners to form companies to drain, reclaim, and protect their land

1882 – 30,000 miles of drainage tile are installed in Indiana to drain wetlands and create farmland

1884 – First efforts to drain, dredge, and straighten the Kankakee marshes begin

1903 – President Theodore Roosevelt establishes the country's first National Wildlife Refuge in Florida marsh

1909 – Gene Stratton Porter's *A Girl of the Limberlost* is first published; the novel depicts the flora and fauna of northeast Indiana's Limberlost Swamp



1913 – Major flooding in Peru and Indianapolis causes millions of dollars in damage and loss of life

1914 – First road built over Bacon's Swamp; sinks into unstable peat

1917 – Straightening of the Lower Kankakee begins; original estimated cost is \$6,000 per mile

1920s – Bacon's Swamp studied by teachers, students, and nature enthusiasts; also provides excellent hunting opportunities

1922 – Indiana has 778,000 acres of wetlands

1925 – State of Indiana buys the land that will become Indiana Dunes State Park

1936 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture begins to help farmers by paying part of the cost of draining wetlands

1937 – Second road built over Bacon's Swamp; this one also sinks

1945 – Dirt from post-war housing projects begins to fill up Bacon's Swamp

1956 – "Fence & Fill" campaign takes off following two drownings in Bacon's Swamp and mosquito complaints

1956 – Pigeon River Fish and Wildlife Area established in LaGrange county

1966 – Muscatatuck becomes Indiana's first National Wildlife Refuge

1972 – Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments (Clean Water Act) regulate dredging and filling for the first time

1977 – President Carter's Executive Order 11990 directs federal agencies to minimize loss of wetlands

1972 – Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore dedicated by Governor Witcomb, Senator Birch Bayh, and First Daughter Julie Nixon Eisenhower

1980 – Retirement community is built overlooking Bacon's Lake, all that is left of Bacon's Swamp

1982 – Serious flooding occurs in Ft. Wayne and spring floodwaters overflow the Kankakee River; flood plans are created that include establishing and restoring wetland areas

1985 – Kankakee Fen purchased by the Nature Conservancy

1985 – Indiana has 813,032 acres of wetlands; Food Security Act denies farm program benefits to those who drain wetlands

1988 – Kankakee Fen dedicated as a State Nature Preserve

1991 – President Bush makes "no net loss of wetlands" an administration policy

1993 – President Clinton continues "no net loss of wetlands" as an administration policy and creates new permit requirements for developers who might disturb wetlands

1997 – Nature Conservancy purchases Kankakee Sands and begins restoration

2001 – The U.S. Supreme Court rules that isolated, intrastate bodies of water (including wetlands) do not fall under the protection of the Clean Water Act. This means that about a third of Indiana's wetlands are no longer given any federal protection and can only be protected by state law.

2002 – The U.S. Supreme Court upholds a decision which protects wetlands; allows the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to continue to levy fines against people who drain wetlands for agricultural uses

2003 – Governor O'Bannon announces Wetlands Task Force

To learn more about Indiana's wetlands, visit www.IN.gov/wetlands